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ON EUPATORIUM PERFOLIATUM.

BY R. EGLESFELD GRIFFITH, M.D.

Nat. Ord. COMPOSITE. *Sub. Ord.* Eupatorinæ.

Ser. Syst. SYNGENESIA ÆQUALIS.

EUPATORIUM. *Calyx* simple or imbricated, oblong. *Style* long and semi-bifid. *Receptacle* naked. *Pappus* pilose, or more commonly scabrous. *Seed* smooth and glandular, quinquestriate.—*Nuttall.*

E. perfoliatum. *Stem* villous. *Leaves* connate-perfoliate, oblong, becoming gradually narrower; serrate, rugose, tomentose beneath.—*Beck.*

SVNON. *Eupatorium Virginianum, salviæ foliis.* Plukenet, Alm. 140.

E. foliis connatis tomentosis. Cutler, 478.

E. connatum. Michaux, Fl. Am. 2, 99.

E. perfoliatum. Lin. Sp. Pl. 1174. Willdenow, Sp. Pl. 1761. Pursh, Fl. Am. Sep. 2, 516. Nuttall, Gen. Am.

Pl. 2, 135. Barton, Comp. Fl. Phil. 2, 101. Beck, Bot.

North. and Middle States, 198, &c. &c.

Icon. Pluk. Alm. t. 87, f. 6. Bigelow, Am. Med. Bot. t. ii. Barton, Veg. Mat. Med. U. S. t. 37.

Common names. Bone set. Thorough wort. Indian Sage. Ague weed. Fever wort. Cross wort. Vegetable antimony, &c. &c.

Pharm. *Eupatorium perfoliatum.* U. S.

Officinal. The whole plant.

Description.—Root horizontal, crooked, furnished with few fibres, perennial. Stem erect, round, hairy, simple at the base and trichotomously branched above; from two to four feet high, generally of a grayish green color. The leaves are opposite, decussating each other at regular distances, usually in pairs, but sometimes in threes, connate, perfoliate, broad at their base and gradually tapering to a sharp point. They are narrow, oblong, serrate, scabrous above and tomentose beneath, and like the stem, of a grayish-green color. The upper leaves on the main stem, and most of those on the branches, are merely sessile, not being united at base. Flowers in a dense depressed corymb, formed of smaller ones; peduncles short and hairy. The calyx is imbricated and hirsute, the scales lanceolated and acute; each calyx includes from twelve to fifteen florets, which are tubulous, white, and divided into five segments. The anthers are of a dark blue or black color; filaments five, united in a tube. The seeds are black, prismatic, and acute at base, on a naked receptacle. Pappus furnished with scabrous hairs.

There are several varieties, distinguished by the form of the leaves, the most striking of which is the *E. perfoliatum trifoliatum*, in which the leaves instead of being united in pairs are joined in threes; this variety is far from uncommon in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, and in some localities is more plentiful than any other. The inflorescence of this variety is also in less dense corymbs.

Habitat.—The thorough wort is exclusively an inhabitant of North America, and is abundant in low grounds and on the margins of streams in every part of this extensive continent. It sometimes occurs in the greatest profusion, covering whole acres of ground. It flowers in the month of August, continuing in bloom until late in October.

Bot. Hist.—The genus *Eupatorium* derives its name from Mithridates Eupator, who is said to have successfully employed one of the species as an antidote against certain poisons. It is very extensive, containing nearly one hundred species, of which Pursh describes twenty-seven as natives of the United States, and although many of these are mere varieties, subsequent discoveries have shown that at least thirty species are indigenous; the remainder of the genus is peculiar to other parts of the American continent, with the exception of a few species found in Europe and Asia.

Med. Hist.—The thorough wort appears to have been known to the aborigines, and to have been highly esteemed for its febrifuge properties; from them the early settlers in this country derived their knowledge of its virtues, and it became a favorite remedy in domestic practice, long before it attracted the attention of medical men. In consequence, however, of some experiments made with it in a variety of febrile affections, it gradually assumed the rank to which it was justly entitled and now recognized by all our Pharmacopœias and Dispensatories.

Med. properties and uses.—Every part of the *E. perfoliatum* is strongly though not disagreeably bitter. It has been employed to fulfil a variety of indications, as it is a tonic, a diaphoretic, or an emetic, according to the mode in which it is administered. Besides these properties, many others have been attributed to it by various writers, but apparently without foundation. In fact, if we were to credit one half that has been advanced respecting the curative powers of this vegetable, it would richly deserve the title of a universal panacea. Such, however, is not the case, and although it is indubitably a highly important article when properly administered, it is by no means deserving of the eulogies that have been so lavishly and injudiciously bestowed upon it.

As an emetic, it is given in a warm decoction, and is considered by Dr. W. Ives as valuable in the early stage of autumnal fevers; it is, however, uncertain in its operation on the stomach, and perhaps scarcely is deserving of more attention in this respect than the decoction of chamomile, or other teas of a similar nature. In large doses it is also said to act on the bowels. Dr. Thacher states that it "has long been esteemed as an efficacious remedy in bilious colic accompanied by obstinate constipation," in the dose of a teacupful every half hour, until it produce a cathartic effect. Here likewise we are somewhat sceptical, and feel inclined to believe that almost every mild decoction taken to this extent would be equally efficacious.

As a diaphoretic, however, we have ample testimony of its powers, particularly in catarrhal affections. Dr. Anderson of New York, who made it the subject of his inaugural thesis, speaks of it in high terms in the various forms of intermittent fever. In his favorable opinion of the diaphoretic powers of the *Eupatorium*, Dr. Anderson is fully sustained by the testimony of numbers of distinguished practitioners. From an extensive use of it for many years, we have been led to conclude that although it is an exceedingly valuable auxiliary in the treatment of these complaints, it is not deserving of the high encomiums that have been bestowed upon it, and that it should not be relied upon to the exclusion of other and more effectual articles.

As a tonic, it is deserving of attention, and is well suited to those cases of dyspepsia and general debility which require the exhibition of the simple bitters. When administered with a view to its tonic powers, it should be given in powder or in cold infusion.

The thorough wort has also been highly praised in the treatment of certain cutaneous affections, but more evidence is wanting on this subject. Dr. William P. C. Barton, who gave it a trial in some cases of obstinate eruptions, found it wholly inefficacious. Dr. Zollickoffer, however, states that in *Tinea capitis* he has been eminently successful, by using it in conjunction with the *potass. sup. tart.*

Pharmaceutical preparations and mode of administration.—When administered with a view to its tonic effect, as has been already observed, it is to be given in substance in doses of from ten to twenty grains, or in cold infusion in doses of two or three ounces. The Pharmacopœia of the United States recognizes but one official preparation, the infusion, which it directs to be made with an ounce of the herb to the pint of boiling water. According to Dr. Zollickoffer, when given in cases of *Tinea capitis*, the following formula is the best.

R. Pulv. fol. Eupat. perfol. 3ss.
Pulv. cremor. tart. 3i.

Mix and divide into eight powders, one of which may be taken in the morning, noon, and at night, and continued until the disease is removed. In cases of children, who are generally averse to taking the above preparation, he recommends the following:—

R. Fol. Eupat. perfol. 3i.
Cremor. tart. 3i.
Aqua bulient, 3 viii.

This preparation is to be permitted to cool, and a sufficient quantity of loaf sugar added to bring it to the consistence of a syrup, by boiling for ten minutes. The dose is two teaspoonfuls, three or four times a day.

Analysis.—No analysis of this plant has been made since the improvements in the processes for the examination of organic substances have taken place. Dr. Bigelow, however, has detailed the results of an examination of it, which is satisfactory as far as it goes. He says the flowers and leaves abound in a bitter extractive matter, which appears to constitute the remedial agent in the plant. This substance is soluble in

water and alcohol. It forms copious precipitates with many of the metallic salts. Sulphuric and hydrochloric acids cause a slight precipitate from the aqueous decoction; chlorine, a more copious one; the nitric gives no precipitate, but changes the color to a red. Tannin exists very sparingly. Sulphate of iron gave a dark green precipitate, which subsided in a short time. On distillation, water came over, very slightly affected with the sensible qualities of the plant, and not alterable by sulphate of iron.

Some difference of opinion has existed among the advocates of the *Eupatorium*, which portion of the plant was to be used. Dr. Anderson concluded, from his experiments, that the active properties resided in the greatest quantity in the leaves; in this opinion he is upheld by Dr. Chapman and others, but more extended observations have shown that every part of the plant may be advantageously used.

All the species of *Eupatorium* appear to be endowed with medicinal qualities in a greater or less degree, and some of them have attained no little celebrity as antidotes against the bite of venomous reptiles.

E. cannabinum, a native of Europe, was at one time in high repute as a deobstruent; but the recent experiments of Deslongchamps and others show that its therapeutic powers have been much overrated.

E. Aya pana, a native of Brazil, was also considered entitled to a conspicuous rank as a universal panacea, and alexipharmic. A careful examination and trial of its reputed powers has, however, fully proved that, like many other equally vaunted articles, it was, comparatively speaking, inert.

In the United States, also, there are several species which require notice, more especially the *E. teucrifolium*, or wild hoarhound. Dr. Jones of Georgia says that this plant "seems an excellent substitute for the Peruvian bark; indeed, among the planters on or near the seaboard, it supersedes the use of the bark in the cure of fevers." He also remarks, "it is tonic, diaphoretic, diuretic, and mildly cathartic, and does not oppress the stomach as Peruvian bark is apt to do." The dose is one ounce of the leaves infused in a quart of water, which may be taken daily in doses of from two to four ounces every hour or two.

It is probable that most of our native species might be used as substitutes for the *E. perfoliatum*, more especially the *E. purpureum* and *E. maculatum*.—*Jour. of the Phila. Col. of Pharmacy*.

ON THE MEDICAL USES OF THE *VIOLA OVATA*.

BY STEPHEN W. WILLIAMS, M.D. OF DEERFIELD, MASS.

VIOLA ovata. *Synonym*. *Viola primulifolia*, Pursh. Rattlesnake violet. *Specific Description*. It is thus described by Nuttall. Leaves ovate, subcordate, crenate, rather acute, often lacerately toothed at the base; equally and for the most part conspicuously pubescent on either side, petiole marginated; scape shorter than the leaves; segments of the calyx subciliate; petals obovate, the two lateral ones bearded. On dry land. Flowers bright blue; flowers in April and May. (North Ameri-

can genera.) I have ventured to give it the English name of rattlesnake violet, from the fact that it is generally known here by the name of the rattlesnake plantain, from its efficacy in curing the bite of that reptile.

Medical Use.—The fact which I shall relate with regard to its efficacy in arresting the direful effects of the bite of the deadly rattlesnake, may be implicitly relied on. Dr. Wells, when living, was considered one of the most eminent, judicious, and observing physicians which Massachusetts has ever claimed. His medical precepts and opinions are treasured up by many of his successors with religious veneration.

Let it not be objected to the *Viola ovata* that we are not acquainted with the active principle of the plant which thus rapidly arrests the progress of one of the most terrible accidents to which humanity is liable. The principal substance which can be extracted from it is mucilage, and this is best done by infusion in water. It yields a greater proportion of it than any of the violets, and nearly as much as the same quantity of slippery elm (*Ulmus fulva*); hence it is much in use in dysentery, diarrhoea, strangury, and other affections of the urinary organs. Other medicinal qualities may reside in the plant, but I have not discovered them. I cannot persuade myself that its specific qualities reside in the mucilage, for other substances yield mucilage in greater abundance, and are not considered alexipharmic. We ought always to be governed by facts rather than speculative opinions. Who can explain the reason why variola vaccina protects the system against the ravages of smallpox? and yet who can doubt the fact? If we can establish the prophylactic qualities of the rattlesnake violet upon as firm grounds, or if we can be instrumental in saving the life of a fellow being laboring under the effects of the bite of this venomous reptile, our object will be accomplished.

Many years ago rattlesnakes abounded in the vicinity of this place. Since the land is cleared, they are rarely to be seen. Our old people were in the habit of using this violet for their bites. They generally know it by the name I have designated. The venerable Henry Wells, M.D., late of Montague, successfully employed it in these cases. To his statement respecting it I wish to draw the attention of physicians. He was called to a patient who was bitten by a rattlesnake, and who was laboring under all the symptoms of a diffusion of the venom. His body was enormously swollen, respiration laborious, and his skin livid. He immediately directed a strong infusion of the rattlesnake violet, and constantly bathed the wound and body with it. In a few hours the tumefaction subsided, the febrile symptoms abated, and the patient was considered nearly out of danger. He retired to rest, and left directions with the nurse to give the violet tea often during the night. The patient continued so much better that the nurse became negligent, and omitted the directions, and fell asleep. From this suspension of the remedy the patient relapsed, and the febrile symptoms returned, and the body was swollen like a puff-ball. The doctor was called, and again directed the remedy as before mentioned: the symptoms yielded, and from a continuance of the remedy two or three days he completely recovered without the use of any other means. Dr. Wells related the above fact to my father, who was formerly a physician in this town, and at the same time

showed him the plant, which my father perfectly recollected, when I collected it for preservation in my herbarium.

My grandfather, Dr. Thomas Williams, formerly of this town, was in the constant habit of using a plant for the bite of the rattlesnake, which he called the rattlesnake plantain, and he was uniformly successful in the use of it. His practice as a physician and surgeon was very extensive. I have no doubt that it was the violet now under consideration.

I have within a few days ceased visiting a little patient who says that a short time before I was called to him he was bitten by a small green snake upon the top of his foot. Not long afterwards he was attacked with pain in his leg, attended with considerable swelling and high fever. I did not see him until he had been laboring under these symptoms some time. When I first saw him I did not apprehend that the fever, tumefaction, &c. proceeded from the bite of the snake, for I was not aware that its bite was venomous. I put him upon the antiphlogistic plan of treatment, and applied the vegeto-mineral water to the inflamed leg. The next day I visited him, and found his symptoms aggravated, and the swelling increasing. I threw aside the mineral water, and directed emollient fomentations with the rattlesnake violet, and a poultice made with bran stirred into the liquor of the infused leaves. The next morning I was highly pleased with the success of the applications. The tumefaction had subsided, and the fever abated. I left him under a confident expectation that he would soon recover. In the course of the afternoon, however, an officious, intermeddling old woman sent word to the parents that my applications were improper, and that nothing would cure him but a cold application of the leaves of houseleek (*Sempervivum tectorum*), which was accordingly applied. The consequence was a universal chill, succeeded by delirium, and an intense burning fever, from which he was not relieved under several days. He was immediately attacked with pain and inflammation in the groin of the other leg, attended with a good deal of swelling. I was immediately sent for, but could not go until the next morning. I directed the violet fomentations and poultices again. In about a fortnight suppuration occurred, and I let out about half a gill of pus upon the tibia, about half way between the knee and instep. The other leg continued swelled three or four weeks longer, when, by the continued application of the violet poultice, it subsided.

I have since used the infusion of this violet, and a fomentation with the leaves of it, in an obstinate case of chronic inflammation of the eyes, which had resisted the long-continued use of a great variety of remedies. The patient had used the slippery elm and various other mucilaginous preparations with no success; in fact, with rather an aggravation of the complaint. Within a fortnight from the time she commenced with the violet infusion, no traces of inflammation about the eyes remained. So it appears it must be some other quality in the violet than its mucilaginous properties which must have effected the change. I am determined in future to use it extensively in the phlegmasiæ, both acute and chronic.

American Journal of the Medical Sciences.

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INTRA-AURICULAR LITHOTRITY.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

MR. EDITOR,—I was much surprised at an article in one of your last numbers, entitled "INTRA-AURICULAR LITHOTRITY."* I could not but feel horror-struck at what the poor child of seven years old, the subject of *drilling a cherry-stone in its ear*, must have, as I think, unnecessarily endured. And after all, the French practitioners did not extract the fragments of the foreign body, but left them to produce suppuration, and thus increase the sufferings of the poor infant.

Perhaps I was more particularly impressed with the severity of this case, from having known an instance of a lady who had a bug fly into the auditory passage. Her sufferings were terrific; and, although the mother of several children, she described her anguish, proceeding from the motion and noise of the insect, as beyond all former experience and present endurance.

The lady described the noise of the bug, whilst in her ear, as exceeding the falling of a mountain or the crash of thunder, whilst its motion gave pain unutterable. Happily it did not last long.

The feather end of a quill from raven, goose, or eagle, smeared in honey, and introduced into the ear, will immediately stop the hum of a bug, or the buzz of a fly, and extract it.

If the substance to be extracted is a cherry-stone, or shot, or kernel of corn, *candied honey* may be preferable to that directly from the hive, because more tenacious and adhesive; and there may be cases wherein something more adhesive than honey can be used with propriety. But by dipping the feather end of a quill into the latter, introducing it into the ear, and turning it round, every substance which lies loosely in the passage may be extracted. This will supersede the use of forceps, and do away the barbarous term, and more barbarous operation, of *auricular lithotrixy*. Indeed, forceps are ill adapted to extract substances from the ear, even if they adhere too strongly to be extracted as above. A small scoop or small blunt hook, is to be preferred.

I recollect one instance in which I made a hook, on the spur of the occasion, from bending a small silver probe. It was a case in which a child had put a bean into its nose, of a globular shape, I believe called the speckled cranberry. It had been suffered to remain so long† as to swell, and even to *sprout*! I succeeded easily in extracting it with my probe hook.

But, as before remarked, for substances that do not adhere, *honey* and the *feather* will be found pleasant and effectual, and would easily have extracted the fragments of the ground cherry-stone, and prevented suppuration, and most probably extracted the stone itself with proper management, in the case to which I have alluded.

It has occurred to the present writer that in the operation of lithotomy, when the calculus is, as is sometimes the case, comminuted into sabulous particles, more or less fine, a swab or mop, dipped in honey,

* No. 14, Vol. 10.—May 14, 1834.

† Somewhat over a fortnight.

would more expeditiously and safely, and with less pain, effect their entire extraction, than can possibly be done with a scoop. The writer was once present at the operation of lithotomy, upon a boy eight years old. The calculus extracted was an inch in diameter; and it appeared that the sand and gravel scooped from the bladder was nearly or quite of equal weight with the stone itself. And after all the care of a diligent operator (the late Dr. Dorsey); it did not appear to me that all the particles could have been extracted, so but that the nucleus of future calculi must have been left.

Duly appreciating the merits of your *Weekly Medical*,

I am, yours, &c. &c.

JOSEPH COMSTOCK, M.D.

Lebanon, Ct. May, 1834.

ON THE USE OF ERGOT.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—I noticed in your last number a Communication from Dr. Coates of Virginia, recommending the Ergot as a general substitute for Forceps in protracted and difficult labors. As the author closed with a call upon the profession for their experience with the ergot in similar cases, I shall venture a few remarks on the subject in question.

That the article does exert a powerful influence on the uterus in certain conditions of that organ, I presume will not be denied by American physicians. That it answers every purpose in tedious, lingering labors, from deficient action of the uterus, is also admitted, and it would probably supersede the use of forceps in a majority of cases, if no important reasons could be given against the use of so active an article. But in communications given to the public through so extensive a medium as your *Journal*, the objections should be given as far as known to every article of the *Materia Medica*, and a very serious one to the use of ergot is a presumption that it is frequently fatal to the child. This is no new idea of mine, as it has been suggested frequently within the last ten years. Yet I wish to add my testimony to what has before been written, that as far as my observations have extended, my opinion is decidedly against the use of it, unless we can be sure of the death of the child previous to its administration.

My attention was first directed to this subject in December 1823, when I saw a well-formed female delivered of a dead child, apparently without any sufficient cause. She had taken the ergot, and thinking it might have done harm, I resolved thereafter to collect what information I could on the subject, and the result has been the belief that a very great proportion of cases treated by the article, have produced stillborn children.

Perhaps it may be said that in cases requiring ergot, the same results would have happened if left to nature, or been delivered by the forceps. This, however, has *not* been the case in many instances apparently as severe as those where ergot was used.

Ergot seems to operate with most benefit in producing uterine contraction immediately after the passage of the child. I have been in the constant habit for years of using it in relaxed habits, and in all cases

where women have been reduced by hemorrhage at former labors, and generally with entire security from flooding. It produces contractions almost as certainly as before the child is delivered, which frequently expel the placenta with very little if any manual assistance; and what is still more important, secures tonic contraction of the organ until all danger of hemorrhage is past. It has sometimes produced nausea and even vomiting, and occasionally appears to aggravate after-pains.

Yours, &c.

HIRAM HOLT.

Pomfret, Conn. May 26, 1834.

SELTZER WATER AND ITS SOURCE.

OUR LAST EXTRACT FROM THE "BUBBLES FROM THE BRUNNEN OF NASSAU."

We must now conclude with a few paragraphs from our author's account of his visit to the source of the Seltzer water—to all sojourners in hot climates one of the most healthful of luxuries. Some like the water pure and unmixed, others dash a little sugar only in the glass, Germans generally prefer it with Rhine-wine, and French voluptuaries with Champagne; while many of the softer sex appear to be of opinion that the most delicious of all compounds is Seltzer water and milk. We do not enter into this controversy.

"The moment we entered the great gate of the enclosure, which, surrounded by a high stone wall, occupies about eight acres of ground, our first impression was, that we had discovered a new world inhabited by brown stone bottles, for in all directions were they to be seen—rapidly moving from one part of the establishment to another—standing actually in armies on the ground—or piled in immense layers or strata. Such a profusion and such a confusion of bottles, it had never entered human imagination to conceive.

"On approaching a large circular shed, covered with a slated roof, but open on all sides, we found the single brunnen, or well, from which this celebrated water is forwarded to almost every city in the world. A small crane with three arms, to each of which there was suspended a square iron crate or basket, a little smaller than the brunnen, stands about ten feet off; and while peasant girls with a stone bottle (holding three pints) dangling on every finger of each hand, are rapidly filling one crate containing seventy bottles, a man turns the third by a winch, until it hangs immediately over the brunnen, into which it then rapidly descends. The air in these seventy bottles being immediately displaced by the water, a great bubbling of course takes place; but in about twenty seconds this having subsided, the crate is raised; and while seventy more bottles descend from another arm of the crane, a fresh set of girls bear off these full bottles, one on each finger of each hand, and range them in several long rows, upon a large table or dresser. No sooner are they there, than two men with surprising activity put a cork into each, while two drummers, with a long stick in each of their hands, hammering them down, appear as if they were playing upon musical glasses. Another set of young women now instantly carry them off, four or five in each hand, to men who with sharp knives slice off the projecting part of the cork; and this being over, the poor jaded bottles are delivered over to women, each of whom actually covers three thousand a day with white leather, which

they firmly bind with packthread round the corks,—then a man seated beside, without any apology, dips each of their noses into boiling hot rosin : before they have recovered from this operation the Duke of Nassau's seal is stamped upon them—and off they are hurried, sixteen and twenty at a time, to magazines where they at length repose in readiness for exportation. When it is considered that a three-armed crane is drawing up bottles seventy at a time, from three o'clock in the morning till seven o'clock at night (meal-hours excepted), it is evident that without very excellent arrangement some of the squads either would be glutted with more work than they could perform, or would stand idle with nothing to do. No one, therefore, dares either to hurry or stop ; the motto of the place might be that of old Goethe's ring with the star upon it—*ohne hast, ohne rast*—Anglicè, *haste not, rest not* !

" Having followed a set of bottles from the brunnen to the store, where we left them resting from their labor, we strolled to another part of the establishment, where were empty bottles calmly waiting for their turn to be filled. We here counted twenty-five bins of bottles, each four yards broad, six yards deep, and eight feet high. A number of young girls were carrying (each thirty-four of them at a time) on their heads to an immense trough, which was kept constantly full by a large fountain-pipe of beautiful clear fresh water. The bottles were filled brim-full (as we conceived for the purpose of being washed), and were then ranged in ranks, or rather solid columns, of seven hundred each.

" We had no sooner, as we thought, bidden adieu to bottles—than we saw, like Birnham Wood coming to Dunsinane, bottles approaching us in every possible variety of attitude. It appears that all the inhabitants of Nieder Selters are in the habit of drinking in their houses this refreshing water ; but as the brunnen is in requisition by the Duke all day long, it is only before or after work that a private supply can be obtained ; no sooner, therefore, does the evening bell ring, than every child in the village is driven out of its house to take empty bottles to the brunnen. The children really looked as if they were made of bottles. Some wore a pyramid in baskets on their heads ; some were laden with them, hanging over their shoulders before and behind—some carried them strapped round their middle—all had their hands full, and the little urchin that could scarcely walk came hugging in its arms one single bottle. The road to the brunnen is actually strewed with fragments, and so are the ditches ; and when the reader considers, besides all he has so patiently heard, that bottles are not only expended and exported, but actually *made* at Nieder Selters, he must admit that no writer can possibly do justice to that place, unless every line of his description contains at least once the word bottle.

" As soon as I reached the village inn, I found there all the slight accommodation I required : a tolerable dinner soon smoked on the table before me ; and feeling that I had seen quite enough for one day of brown stone bottles, I ventured to order (merely for a change) a long-necked glass bottle of a vegetable fluid superior to all the mineral water in the world.

" In the morning, previous to returning to the brunnen, I strolled for some time about the village ; and the best analysis I can offer of the Selters water, is the plain fact, that the inhabitants who have drunk it all their lives are certainly by many degrees the healthiest and ruddiest-looking peasants I have anywhere met with in the Duchy of Nassau."

Next day being Sunday, the travellers had the locality of the brunnen to themselves :—

"In the middle of the great square were the stools on which the cork-covering women had sat, while, at some distance to the left, were the solid regiments of uncorked bottles, which I had seen filled brim-full with pure crystal water the evening before. On approaching this brown-looking army, I was exceedingly surprised at observing, from a distance, that several of the bottles were noseless, and I was wondering why such ones should ever have been filled, when, on getting close to these troops, I perceived, to my utter astonishment, that about one-third of them were in the same mutilated state. The devastations which had taken place resembled the riddling of an infantry regiment under a heavy fire, yet few of our troops, even at Waterloo, lost so great a proportion of their men as had fallen in twelve hours among these immovable phalanxes.

"The governor was good enough to inform me, that bottles in vast numbers being supplied to the duke from various manufactories, in order to prove them they are filled brim-full (as I had seen them) with water, and being left in that state for the night, they are the next morning visited by an officer of the autocrat, whose wand of office is a thin, long-handled little hammer. It appears that the two prevailing sins to which stone bottles are prone, are having cracks and being porous, in either of which cases they of course in twelve hours leak a little. The officer, who is judge and jury in his own court-yard, carries his own sentences into execution with a rapidity which even our Lord Chancellor himself can only hope eventually to imitate. Glancing his hawk-like eye along each line, the instant he sees a bottle not brim-full, without listening to long-winded arguments, he at once decides 'that there can be no mistake, that there shall be no mistake,' and thus, at one tap of the hammer, off goes the culprit's nose—'So much for Buckingham !'—p. 320.

The bottles filled for exportation in 1832 were, according to the governor's book—*large*, one million thirty-three thousand six hundred and sixty-two; *small*, two hundred and sixty-one thousand five hundred and twenty-one; and besides this there is a *gratis* consumption on the spot, and its immediate vicinity, of at least half a million of bottles. The large bottles, when full, are sold at the brunnen for thirteen florins a hundred. The duke's profit in 1832, deducting all expenses, appeared to be as nearly as possible fifty thousand florins; and yet this brunnen was sold to his highness's ancestor for a single butt of wine !

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BOSTON, JUNE 4, 1834.

CHANGE OF AIR AS A REMEDY IN HOOPING COUGH.

Of all the means which have been advised in this disease, none seems so well to have established its claims to confidence as the simple change of air. It is not necessary, in order to the efficacy of this remedy, that the change should be made to an atmosphere of greater purity. Children have been conveyed from the country into town, and from one part of the country to another, with nearly the same benefit that they have derived

from exchanging the air of the city for that of the open fields. On what principle these similar effects of opposite plans of treatment are to be explained, is not very clear. The following attempt to reduce them to the operation of the contagion generated by the disease, is not destitute of plausibility.

"Till lately," says Dr. La Roche, as quoted in a dissertation on this disease, which gained the prize of the Medical Society at Lyons, "authors have confined themselves to advising the transportation of patients affected with hooping cough, into the country, without explaining to themselves the mode of action of this curative means; hence have they obtained from it only uncertain effects. Convinced of the contagious property of hooping cough, we have thought that the sick must vitiate the air in the midst of which they live, by charging it continually with the contagious miasm, probably secreted by the pulmonary mucous membrane, and that they must at the same time impregnate their clothing with it at each instant. Guided by this view, we have advised to transport the little patients frequently from one place to another; to renew their clothing frequently, and not to bring them back to a place which they have already occupied, or to make them resume the clothes which they have laid aside, until both have been purified by exposure to the vapor of the chlorides. We had these chlorides also placed to evaporate in the apartment which they inhabited. Some rapid cures have gone to encourage these attempts, which we propose to continue. In some cases it has proved sufficient to change the apartment and the dress daily, in order to obtain the same good effects." Following up this idea, another French physician, Doctor Joly, in a case of hooping cough, which had resisted all ordinary means, had placed in the patient's room some vessels containing chloride of lime. In three or four days the number of paroxysms during the night was reduced from forty or fifty to four or five, and in a short time the disease entirely disappeared. If the theory is correct, however, on which these facts are explained, the treatment in question ought to be equally efficacious for other contagious diseases. In typhus, particularly, the change of place ought to have the effect of abridging materially the duration of the fever. So far as this has been tried, the results have not exactly corresponded with this view of the subject. If the advantage of change consists entirely in the ventilation, the country ought to be decidedly preferable to the city. Independently of this, however, there would seem to be something in the mere change of the impressions made upon the mucous membrane of the air passages, or possibly in those made on the nervous system generally, by which the morbid habit, which would otherwise have continued to an unlimited extent, is broken up and destroyed.

Are there not too many good observers, men of science and talent, in the profession, who are satisfied with giving to the world the details of the remarkable cases which they have witnessed, without attempting to deduce therefrom any general principles, or by means of them to make any permanent additions to the stock of medical knowledge. From clinical observations well and carefully conducted, there is doubtless much valuable information to be derived; but the inferences should be drawn by the observer, and not left by him to be made by others. There is a feeling with many that facts are more likely to be correctly seen and faithfully reported when the mind is not only free from any prejudice, but uninfluenced by any reference to theory. This is perhaps true; but on

the other hand, unless the facts observed in the aggregate point to some general principle, of what service can they be made to the world? They had better remain in the note-book of the individual until more extended observation shall enable him to combine and simplify them; for he cannot expect others to draw conclusions from his own facts, which he is not capable of obtaining from them. Single cases, presenting extraordinary deviations from the usual course of events, are at all times interesting; but a collection of cases of the same disease can hardly be read with patience, unless they bear on some one point in the theory of the disease, or in the treatment which it demands. These observations may seem trite and unimportant, but they will hardly be deemed impertinent by one who examines the medical literature of the day, and observes how much both journals and books are swelled with perfectly useless and unreadable matter, under the head of reports. "Certain persons," says a French writer whom we now have before us, "think they have done a great deal for science, when they recount particular observations at great length; and it is even thought, generally, in our day, that in this manner an author exhibits his candor and love of truth, by giving only the unvarnished facts. For myself, I am of opinion that these details amount to very little. When an author of credit tells briefly what he has seen, he learns as much from it himself as when he reports it in detail; while on the other hand it is as easy for a dishonest man to falsify facts as to mistake general principles deducible from them. To my mind, a man more subserves the cause of science by deducing from a certain number of well-observed cases, all their rigorous consequences, than by recounting in prolix style insulated and sterile facts, with all the details with which they can be loaded. An observation has no value in medicine, except by the general result to which it points us. And I should hold that a few pages embracing the results of cases carefully observed, will be more profitable to the public than volumes filled with the same cases minutely reported: for the last work, nothing is wanted but patience; for the first, good sense is also required, and this is a much rarer accomplishment."

But it may be said there is no general principle without its exceptions, and by giving the particular facts on which the principle is founded, its value may be judged of by the reader for himself. But this is an investigation which few will have the patience to make in regard to the facts reported by others, which from the imperfection of language they would feel unable to appreciate justly, even with unbounded confidence in the good faith and accuracy of the reporter. Secondly, it is as easy to state the proportion of exceptions which have been met with to any law, as it is to enunciate the law itself; and lastly, there is little danger that any principle, however broadly stated, should be applied without hesitation or examination to practice. The very circumstance that such a conclusion has been arrived at by another, will serve to direct attention to facts and cases inconsistent with, and militating against it, and an estimate of its true value will soon be formed by each one for himself.

In medicine, as in other branches of science, there is ever danger of extremes. The fault of the ancients was to theorize too much. The fault of some, at least, of the medical writings of our day, is an excess of detail, which appals the reader and prevents him from obtaining the very information which they are intended to convey, and which they actually contain. A very large proportion of the materials which are required for a medical work or a contribution to a journal, may safely be suffered to

remain in the exclusive possession of the author; while that portion which can be expected to possess any interest for the public at large, must consist mainly of those general views to which he finds himself fairly conducted, by the total amount of his experience and observation.

MEDICINAL USE OF ERGOT.

We notice in the *Journal General de Therapeutique* an article by Messrs. Trouneau and Maisonneuve on the subject of spurred rye, at the conclusion of which the authors deliver the result of their experience in the following propositions. It should be remembered that the French physicians mean by a dose of the medicine the amount given in twenty-four hours, and not the quantity administered at one time.

1. The ergot of rye exercises on the uterus a powerful but transient action.

2. This action goes principally to the fibres of this organ, and there determines contractions.

3. These contractions, always accompanied with pain, induce immediate cessation of menorrhagia, whatever its cause may be.

4. The state of the uterus has no influence on their production.

5. They are observed even when a part of the fibres of the uterus has been removed by cancer.

6. Ergot of rye acts on the central nervous organ in the manner of narcotics.

7. The resulting phenomena are slow but durable.

8. They never prove of serious importance when the object is merely to combat the menorrhagia.

9. That the dose of ergot may be carried without inconvenience to several drachms in four or five days.

10. That when the object is to cure menorrhagia, it is well to divide the doses and give them at equal intervals.

11. Finally, that we need not fear to begin with a larger dose, a drachm for instance in 24 hours.

They add the following table, which may be considered as presenting an abstract of their observations on this subject.

Observations.	Age.	No. of Labors or Miscarriages.	Period of Disease.	Cure.	Amount taken.
1. Menorrhagia.	18 y.		13 days.	In 60 hours.	216 grains.
2. do.	23		6 weeks.	7	108
3. do.	30		15 days.	40	168
4. do.	39		1 month.	1-4	108
5. do.	41		1 month.	6	204
6. do.	28	1	9 days.	18	192
7. do.	23	2	1 month.	72	240
8. do.	32	3	9 days.	96	132
9. Metorrhagia.	36	2	8 days.	24	180
10. do.	30	5	6 hours.	1-2	51
11. do.	30	Several.	7 days.	10 days.	192
12. do.	35	10	4 days.	5 days.	288
13. Carcinoma uteri.	49		36 hours.	36 hours.	120

EMETICS IN CROUP.

Dr. James Johnson's remarks on the Article Croup, from Clinical Observations. By Dr. STEINMETS, of Pyrmont.

THE inefficacy of the ordinary treatment by leeches and calomel, induced Dr. S. to trust almost entirely to the steady employment of emetics. The usual formula he has used is three grains of emetic tartar dissolved in an ounce of water, to be sweetened with sugar. A dessert spoonful may be given at first, and then every five minutes a teaspoonful, until very free vomiting be induced. He has sometimes added three grains of sulphate of copper, in cases which required immediate relief. The nausea and occasional retching should be kept up till the danger be over.

The success which Dr. S. has derived from this treatment is stated to be very gratifying.

TRACHEOTOMY IN CROUP.

Upon a memoir lately read before the Academy of Sciences, upon the utility of *Tracheotomy* in Croup, Dr. Johnson remarks as follows :

"Dr. Maingault read a memoir on the 'Urgency of performing Tracheotomy in Croup.' The conclusions which he has drawn from his extended researches are the following.

"1. That the operation should be performed without delay, when the antiphlogistic and other remedies have failed, or promise little benefit.

"2. That the success of the operation is much dependent upon the extent of the inflammation; when it is confined to the larynx, our prognosis may be more favorable.

"3. That the opening into the trachea should be made very cautiously, and by repeated strokes with the scalpel, 'a plusieurs reprises,' because the sudden rushing in of the air through a large aperture may cause asphyxia; and also the ready admission of blood into the windpipe is obviated considerably.

"4. That the insufflation of any powder, or the introduction of any liquid, through the wound into the trachea, ought to be denounced."

Medical Gazette.

Palm Oil.—This substance may be deprived of its orange color by the following process, given by M. Michaelis :—A certain quantity of the colored oil is to be melted in a copper vessel over a mild fire; when it is quite liquid, one-sixteenth of its weight of finely pulverized peroxide of manganese is to be added to it. The oxide and oil kept over a moderate fire for five or ten minutes and continually stirred; boiling water equal to half the weight of the oil is to be added, and the whole boiled, after which one-thirty-second part of the sulphuric acid of commerce is to be very cautiously and gradually mixed with it; after stirring for some time, the mixture is to be permitted to cool. The oil collects at the top, whilst the peroxide of manganese sinks to the bottom. This oil has a yellowish color, which, if the operation has succeeded properly, has a green tinge like olive oil; on being subjected to the action of the air and light, it soon becomes as white as hog's lard. When employed to make soap, it gives a very white product, and when burnt does not clog the wick with charcoal, as is the case before it is purified.—*Poggen. Annal.*

It gives us pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of the following notice from the Secretary of the Medical Society of Connecticut.

At the Annual Meeting of the President and Fellows of the Connecticut Medical Society, held at New Haven, May 14th and 15th, 1934, it was

Resolved, on motion of Prof. T. HUBBARD, That this Convention approve of the plan of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal. They consider it a meritorious work, affording an interesting variety of useful practical matter, both original and selected; and they recommend it to the patronage of the Medical Profession. Test,

[Extracted from the Records.]

CHARLES HOOKER, Secretary.

We are very sorry to hear that some of our subscribers in Connecticut receive the Journal irregularly. We can assure them that the numbers are punctually placed in the Boston post office on the day of publication, and that the cause of this irregularity cannot therefore be attributed to us. Measures have been taken to ascertain where the fault belongs, and we trust they will be successful and our subscribers have no further cause of complaint.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending May 30, 33. Males, 15—Females, 8.

Of droupy, 1—lung fever, 1—fits, 2—consumption, 5—child-bed, 1—brain fever, 2—inflammatory fever, 1—croup, 1—drowned, 1—old age, 1—hooping cough, 2—disease of the heart, 1—diarrhea, 1—droupy on the brain, 1—palsy, 1—infantile, 1. Stillborn, 3.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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Applications are to be made to Dr. WALTER CHANNING, Tremont Street, opposite the Tremont House, Boston.

April 2. 1864m

WALTER CHANNING,
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Boston, March, 1834.

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Board, in respectable families in the city, may be had at three dollars a week.

JOHN C. WARREN,
GEORGE HAYWARD,
ENOCH HALE, JR.

Boston, May, 1834.

May 7. 1834.

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